
International Journal of Student Voice

A peer-reviewed, independent, open-access journal

Pennsylvania State University

Volume 6, Number 6

IJSV

2021

Kia Manaaki te Tangata: Rangatahi Māori Perspectives on Their Rights as Indigenous Youth to Whānau Ora and Collective Wellbeing

Catherine Page and Sarika Rona Institute of Education, Massey University. New Zealand

Citation: Page, C. & Rona, S. (2021). Kia Manaaki te Tangata: Rangatahi Māori Perspectives on Their Rights as Indigenous Youth to Whānau Ora and Collective Wellbeing. *International Journal of Student Voice*, 6 (6), <https://sites.psu.edu/ijsv/volume-6/>

Abstract: Recognition of children's rights to participation, voice and influence on what wellbeing means to children has increased in recent times in Aotearoa New Zealand. This article argues that rangatahi Māori offer unique perspectives and solutions for the wellbeing of whānau Māori. Taking a kaupapa Māori methodological and theoretical stance, this report explores how urban rangatahi

from Te Ōnewanewa conceptualise whānau ora and understand their rights as tāngata whenua to whānau ora. The findings from this study suggest that the rangatahi participants view connection with whānau, to ūkaipo, to their Māoritanga, and to wairua as integral factors that contribute whānau wellbeing. Relationships underpinned by aroha and manaakitanga support whānau ora and are supports and indicators that their whānau are well. This report supports previous research which asserts that whānau are essential to wellbeing of rangatahi, and also highlights how rangatahi are rangatira of today within their whānau, hapū and iwi.

Keywords: Indigenous, youth, rangatahi, Māori, children's rights, wellbeing, whānau ora

Introduction

Traditionally, the development, participation, and survival of mokopuna Māori was protected through cultural practices, processes, rituals and knowledge (Mead, 2016). Tikanga grounded in a 'collective ethic of care' (Simmonds et al., 2019) were exercised by whānau, hapū and iwi (Moeke-Pickering, 1996). Waiata, oriori, mōteatea, pūrākau and whakataukī highlight the treasured status of mokopuna as rangatira. This article is based on this premise, advocating that rangatahi are insightful, creative and have solutions for transformative change now, as well as future aspirations for their whānau (Tawhai, 2016).

Within the context of recent neo-liberal reforms, social indicators in youth suicide, youth unemployment and the increase in youth homelessness indicate that

tāngata whenua rights to wellbeing are not being met. This social crisis has impacted Māori youth significantly, who are overrepresented in national statistics in these areas (Housing First Auckland, 2018). The Office of the Children's Commissioner (2015) has expressed the urgent need to address the wider economic, political and systemic issues, which result in a disproportionate number of Māori and Pasifika children living in poverty. Given the historic failure of government interventions for wellbeing, tāngata whenua rights-based advocacy is necessary for meaningful progression.

Tāngata Whenua Rights

Government wellbeing measures and rights-based frameworks focus on the individual and fail to recognise that “the wellbeing of tamariki Māori is inextricable from the wellbeing of whānau (Māori Affairs Committee, 2013, p. 5).” Tāngata whenua rights-based frameworks disrupt the dominant discourse, recentring kaupapa Māori collective understandings of wellbeing (King et al., 2018).

Children's rights advocates are challenged to decolonise the prominent western notion of 'rights.' King, Cormack, and Kōpua (2018) argue that only when tāngata whenua rights are realised, can international human rights be useful.

The Oranga Mokopuna framework by King et al (2018), affirms that tāngata whenua rights originate in whakapapa and tikanga, the soil and roots of te pā harakeke. He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirene (He

Whakaputanga) and Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Te Tiriti) are the founding documents between Māori and the crown and represent the mātua. He Whakaputanga recognises that Aotearoa is an independent state, where rangatira and hapū have full sovereign power. Te Tiriti further affirms He Whakaputanga, and articulates mokopuna Māori rights to tino rangatiratanga, and kāwanatanga over their whānau wellbeing and their status as protected taonga in legislation.

Mokopuna Māori rights to collective wellbeing are supported by international conventions. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) is one of many international safeguards that supports the wellbeing of whānau. King et al (2018) and Libesman (2007) note how Article 30 guarantees collective cultural rights of Indigenous children. Espejo and Yaksic (2018) suggest that a more representative conceptualisation of Indigenous children's best interest is emerging, where collective rights are jointly acknowledged. This is reflected in Article Five which states

that 'family' ... refers to a variety of arrangements...including...the extended family, and other traditional and modern community-based arrangements... (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child., 2005).

Rangatahi Voice

Rangatahi Māori have always held important roles and contributed to the wellbeing of whānau, iwi and hapū. Traditionally their voices were heard, their mana was recognised, and they were active catalysts for change (Tawhai, 2016).

Today rangatahi are at the forefront of issues on housing, te reo Māori revitalisation, climate change, and hapū and iwi advancement. Yet the mana of youth is often overlooked in research, which has typically highlighted deficits and positioned rangatahi Māori as problems to be solved (Smith, 2012). A tāngata whenua rights approach to whānau ora changes the dialogue from what is the matter with rangatahi, to what matters for rangatahi.

In Tāmaki Makaurau, Māori make up 25 percent of the total Māori population. Within this population over half are aged under 25 years and nearly a third under 15 years (Auckland Council Research and Evaluation Unit, 2020). Although rangatahi make up a significant percentage of the Māori population, rangatahi voice is often missed or overlooked when drafting policy and legislation (Landsown, 2011).

Rangatahi are often weaved into narratives that emphasise ‘future potential’, and policy and practice are promoted as being in ‘the best interest’ for their ‘futures (Tawhai, 2016).’ This article argues that rangatahi live in the past, present and future within their whānau, hapū and iwi. Drawing strength and inspiration from their tūpuna, rangatahi are creative problem solvers for issues we face today, for the wellbeing of future generations.

Whānau

Whānau has always been the foundation of collective and collaborative life.

Moeke-Pickering (1996) notes that traditionally it was within whānau, where members learnt tikanga, and ture. An ethic of care (Simmonds et al., 2019) underpinned whānau practices and protocols. Responsibilities and obligations were maintained, and behaviour was controlled through tapu and makutu. Any action that disrespected the mana of an individual, also harmed the wider whānau. This resulted in a restorative process of appropriate redress, to restore the mana of those impacted. Child rearing practices are captured throughout mōteatea, waiata, oriori, whakataukī and pūrākau. Traditionally tūpuna had the most influential and important role in guiding the whānau, who were informed by the atua and tūpuna stories passed down through generations. Tūpuna had the primary parenting responsibilities, however raising tamariki was collective. This mātauranga is captured in the whakataukī ‘Matua Rautia’ to raise your children collectively (Simmonds et al., 2019). Whānau are positioned within a wider whakapapa of physical and spiritual relations. Walker (2013) suggests that whānau is a continuum that transcends both vertically and horizontally. This definition recognises the importance of whānau relationships with the spiritual realm. Marsden (1992) supports this view, stating that Māori walk between two worlds, “with roots in the earth and crown in the heavens (p.12).” The intrinsic connection between these social institutions, where whānau is the centre which spreads out to hapū, iwi, and te ao wairua, highlights the interwoven nature of the Māori worldview.

The impacts of colonialism and subsequent urbanisation of Māori whānau completely disrupted whānau dynamics and wellbeing (Metge, 2014). The raupatu resulted in hapū and iwi losing 95% of their land. Moeke-Pickering (1996) notes how this devastation reduced Māori opportunity to experience living, working, learning and developing economic and social prosperity from their tribal lands. Smith (2012) highlights how this shift away from whenua and traditional ways of living fostered the decline of te reo Māori, cultural practices and the colonisation of thinking and knowledge.

Another major disruption for the whānau unit was the state enforced process of urbanisation. Away from papakāinga and support networks, whānau had become smaller, and the responsibilities of individuals within whānau increased (MoekePickering, 1996). These changes in familial structures coupled with the confiscation of land, suppression of traditional rongoā and healing practices, and forced assimilation of culture and language, eroded traditional Māori wellbeing. The intergenerational effects are seen today in entrenched inequities across the health, housing and education sectors (Durie, 2011).

Despite the destructive impact of colonization in Aotearoa New Zealand, the whānau unit remains as the cornerstone of Māori culture. In response to rapid urbanisation whānau have adapted as two main groups, kaupapa whānau and whakapapa whānau (Metge, 2014). Whakapapa whānau relate to whānau based on ancestral descent, whereas kaupapa whānau relations are connected through a common purpose. Durie (2011) suggests that whānau engagement in cultural

practices remains strong despite the evolving terminology. Edwards, McCreanor, and Moeke-Barnes (2007) research with urban rangatahi Māori supports this. Some participants lived in single parent homes, however whānau members continued to look to extended family relationships first for advice and support. Edwards et al argue (2007) that these examples highlight the robustness and durability of whānau, in the face of adversity.

Whānau Ora

Māori wellbeing is underpinned by the collective premise which is reflected in all aspects of Te Ao Māori. Whānau health and wellbeing is literally translated as whānau ora. Lawson Te Aho (2010) and Boulton and Gifford (2014) argue that the translation of whānau ora, fails to capture the contextual, multi-dimensional, concept that stems from distinctly Māori values. Furthermore, Lawson Te Aho (2010) adds that whānau ora is indivisible. For example children's mental, physical, and spiritual wellbeing is influenced, supported, and contained within whānau relationships.

Whānau ora is both an outcome and a determinant of individual wellbeing (Durie, 2011). In the national research project 'What Makes a Good Life' children reported that whānau should be well for children to be well, and whānau should be involved in making things better (Office of the Children's Commissioner &

Oranga Tamariki-Ministry for Children, 2019). The Māori Affairs Committee (2013) stated that “acknowledging the importance of collective identity for a Māori child is a first step in realising the potential of a whānau-centred approach to their wellbeing (p. 5)”.

Simmonds et al (2019) emphasise that we need to have measures and frameworks that we understand and know when we have achieved good health.

Several Māori researchers have presented frameworks to capture the various determiners of Māori wellbeing (Cram, 2019; Durie, 2011; Pere, 1997; Whānau Ora Taskforce, 2010). While authors highlight how determiners can differ between whānau, hapū and iwi, there is some consensus among the frameworks. Most literature reports how Māori wellbeing is interconnected, intergenerational, multi-dimensional and contextually defined.

Mokopuna Māori rights

Several researchers have noted the complexities between Indigenous peoples and human rights (Doel-Mackaway, 2019; Espejo-Yaksic, 2018; King et al., 2018; Libesman, 2007; Mikaere, 2007; Paton, 2017). Mikaere (2007) notes that the ideology behind the United Nations bestowing rights upon Indigenous people is problematic in itself. Lundy (2019) recognises this critique, stating that the development of the UNCROC was a flawed compromise, but it remains flexible to those who want to challenge discrimination and inequality. Despite this, King et al

(2018) argue that when considering mokopuna Māori rights, there needs to be caution and awareness of these tensions.

King et al (2018) offer a framework to contextualise children's rights in Aotearoa. Their framework, Oranga Mokopuna, recentres Indigenous perspectives, and frame mokopuna Māori rights, within tāngata whenua rights. Oranga Mokopuna draws on mātauranga Maori understandings of how wellbeing is protected and positions international conventions as additional supports. Mokopuna are positioned as future rangatira, who blossom when the harakeke is supported to grow.

Rangatahi Voice

In Aotearoa, several authors have contributed research focussed on mokopuna Māori rights, participation and voice. Berryman and Eley (2018) have highlighted rangatahi voice on their rights to culture, education, and discrimination. Their findings suggest that rangatahi Māori wellbeing is being undermined by underlying discrimination in English-medium schools. Rangatahi Māori reported that despite government efforts their rights are not being fulfilled across the education sector (Berryman & Eley, 2018).

Similarly, McRae, Macfarlane, Webber, and Cookson-Cox (2010), have included rangatahi Māori voice in their work, in relation to identity, culture and educational success. Their model, Ka Awatea Mana, outlines determiners for rangatahi Māori

success from Te Arawa. This project is iwi specific and relates how general determiners such as relationships, wellbeing, values, and identity are explored within Te Arawa context. Webber (2011) has written extensively on identity, race, ethnicity, culture and how this impacts rangatahi Māori. However, within the whānau ora space there appears to be a gap exploring whānau and rangatahi voice. Boulton and Gifford (2014) note that there is a “dearth of empirical material” exploring what constitutes whānau ora from the perspective of whānau (p. 3). Their research attempted to fill this gap, and found that there was a degree of alignment between whānau perspectives and the whānau ora taskforce indicators. There was consensus from whānau that tamariki wellbeing and the wellbeing of future generations was a key motivator to keep working towards achieving whānau ora (Boulton & Gifford, 2014).

More recently, Simmonds et al (2019) completed a project titled, Te Taonga o taku Ngākau. Their research explores how whānau ancestral knowledge contributes to the wellbeing of tamariki within whānau. Their findings assert that intergenerational ancestral knowledge within whānau, are powerful interventions that support collective wellbeing. While both projects directly link to this project, their participants included whānau collectives. This article is an addition to literature, through the addition of rangatahi voice in the whānau ora space.

Methodology

This study is a kaupapa Māori qualitative exploration of rangatahi perspectives within the Te Ōnewanewa school community. Te Ōnewanewa serves a diverse urban Tāmaki Makaurau community, who whakapapa to many hapū and iwi and different cultures. Te Whānau is a tikanga Māori centred, kaupapa whānau, and formclass within the school.

My (Catherine Page) whakapapa connections to Pare Hauraki, Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga, and Ngā Puhi and my position as a Māori whānau member, previous staff member, and tuakana, locates me in the community of interest. The importance and relevance of the research outcomes for the local Māori community participating, provide the basis for undertaking kaupapa Māori research. Positioning oneself as a researcher challenges the western notion that researchers need to be objective and disconnected from 'who' and 'what' they are researching (Bishop, 2011).

Kaupapa Māori refers to Māori understandings which underpin research and values, as well as the importance of Māori ways of operating. Born out of political struggle for tino rangatiratanga and mana motuhake, this approach asserts by Māori for Māori research (Smith, 2012). In this space, the Māori worldview and cultural assumptions are privileged, and traditional deficit theories are actively criticised and repositioned (Pihama, 2016). Pihama (2016) notes that kaupapa Māori research has an overarching cultural lens, and challenges the assumption that researchers are a-cultural and objective.

Rangatahi Voice and Participation in Methods

Indigenous research methods assert the importance of knowledge sharing strategies that are co-designed with communities. The staff and rangatahi at Te Ōnewanewa had direct input during the planning phase. The rangatahi wanted to know the interviewer, and be with their friends in a familiar environment. Having worked at Te Ōnewanewa with the rangatahi and grown up in the area, I had previously established relationships. Hui were chosen to respect the rangatiratanga of the rangatahi and to encourage wānanga. Knowledge sharing through wānanga “cuts across relations of power” fostering relationships within the process (Smith, Cameron, Pihama, Mataki, Morgan, & Te Nana, 2019, p. 1).

Three hui were conducted kanohi ki te kanohi and followed tikanga Māori. Each hui had karakia, mihi mihi, wānanga and finished with kai. The rangatahi decided when the hui would take place, what kai we would share, and the time duration. Bishop and Glynn (1999) argue that this form of whakawhanaungatanga fosters participant driven research practices. Furthermore, there was no set allocated time for the focus group. Durie (2011) notes that in kaupapa Māori methods dedicating time is more important than being ‘on time’.

The name of the report, ‘Kia manaaki te tangata’ is an acknowledgement of the rangatahi who contributed to this research as well as Te Ōnewanewa. This whakataukī guides the philosophy of the school and was a strong theme throughout the hui. To acknowledge Te Whānau, the whakataukī that underpin

their four pou tikanga guide themes in the results section.

Results

Ngā Hononga – Foundations for Whānau ora

Whanaungatanga

Whanaungatanga has many meanings, such as relationships, kinship, and a sense of family connection and belonging (Mead, 2016). The rangatahi interviewed come from diverse whānau and backgrounds. Some live close to or with several members of their whānau, while others lived in what is considered a more nuclear family arrangement with connections to their wider whānau. All of the rangatahi considered their *friends* to be in their whānau as well as whakapapa relations.

All rangatahi talked about the importance of fostering relationships and connecting with whānau now and for future generations. The rangatahi also expressed that they would like to spend *more time with their whānau*. Rangatahi rima said

Probably just like being around each other and like making lots of memories so our kids can tell them what we do, and so it like just keeps going.

Furthermore, the hui process highlighted tuakana-teina relationships within Te

Whānau and the wider school. When asked who was in their whānau, rangatahi waru *said the whānau class*. Rangatahi whā said she loved school, *because I like know everyone*.

Ūkaipō

Ūkaipō refers to the sustenance of a mother's breast milk and is parallel to the deep relationship between humans and land (Pere, 1994). Eight rangatahi spoke to experiences on their own marae or whenua, while rangatahi ono spoke to visiting marae through marae noho. Rangatahi iwa spoke about how she felt happy, learning about her tūpuna and visiting her whenua for the first time. In contrast, rangatahi rua knows everyone at the marae and told stories about his whānau there. Rangatahi rua spoke about how his tūpuna were buried there.

Rangatahi whā emphasised the importance of belonging. She said

Yeah I just feel like I belong there, more than like any other place. And it's like my family so it matters.

Furthermore, the rangatahi talked about kaitiakitanga through the enjoyment of gathering, hunting, and diving for kai to feed everyone.

Māoritanga

Identity and culture is a key determiner of Māori wellbeing (Whānau Ora Taskforce, 2010). The rangatahi have varying connections to their Māoritanga, some confident on the marae, others talked to how Te Ōnewanewa and Te Whānau supported their Māori identity. All rangatahi are currently learning te reo Māori. Rangatahi waru talked about the importance of keeping te reo Māori alive for future generations. Five rangatahi spoke about the importance of keeping traditions alive.

Rangatahi waru feels good learning traditional *arts and crafts*. Her Māoritanga connects to her tūpuna. She said

Whenever I am doing anything that is with my culture I just feel really special and safe and I just feel like they are all cheering me on, watching me, and I feel like they are really proud of me. That's what I feel like.

The rangatahi all reflected on the collective nature of Māori wellbeing within te pā harakeke. Rangatahi iwa reflected on how *it is like the plant is depressed* when the parents are taken away from the rito, but they would *sacrifice anything* for their children, *even themselves*.

Wairua

One translation for wairua is two waters, or the balance between positive and negative streams (Pere, 1997; Valentine, 2016). From a Māori worldview, everything and everyone has a wairua which is eternal. The rangatahi spoke about the wairua of our tūpuna and how they felt went their whānau were well. Rangatahi whā felt comfortable around the photos of the tūpuna and felt it was important to talk to them to let them know that she is okay. Three rangatahi explained how when they see their whānau feeling good, *they felt better*. Rangatahi whā mentioned how her whānau have had to live with mental illness, and when she saw them doing well, it made her *feel good*. Rangatahi rima said “*I feel like when I’m with certain people from my family it’s kind of like nothing else matters, it’s just kind of like you are there*”.

In contrast, rangatahi waru and whitu explained how when one person was in a bad mood, the whānau *was off*. Rangatahi rua reflected on how everyone on the street next to his marae had passed, including his Nan, Pop and aunties and uncles. This had impacted his own wellbeing making him feel like *ratshit*. **Ngā take pū whānau – Supports and Indicators for Whānau ora Manaakitanga**

Ngā take pū whānau are values underpinning tikanga Māori practices and are protective factors for whānau wellbeing (McLachlan et al., 2017). The rangatahi spoke about how manaakitanga, and aroha underpinned their relationships in their whānau. Manaaki is active, reciprocal (Jones, 2019) and involves

“acknowledging, supporting and strengthening one’s individual and/or collective mana” (Lee-Morgan et al., 2019, p. 29).

Rangatahi toru said the best thing about his whānau was the help. Rangatahi tahi mentioned how employment could position him to manaaki his whānau. When asked why it was important to have a job, he responded *to look after everyone*.

Rangatahi tahi and rua received support during the rāhui from iwi and Māori health providers. Rangatahi tahi spoke about how his whānau were given *food parcels* and boxes with *hand sanitiser* and other health necessities from the local iwi health provider. Rangatahi rua talked about how his marae exercise manaaki at the marae through kai. He said

We were at the marae and there was a funeral. People just come down and drop off pigs in the bloody chiller, and they still got the skin on them and not even been gutted, and my uncle’s like ‘ohh far out’.

The rangatahi viewed their tūpuna as *protective* and *supportive* for the wellbeing of whānau and talked to the manaaki between tuakana/teina. Rangatahi ono talked about how her *nan’s place* was where people gathered, and rangatahi rua said everyone *was always welcome* at his nan’s house. Nine of the ten rangatahi mentioned the manaaki between tuakana and teina. When asked what dreams or aspirations they had for their whānau, rangatahi rua replied that he would buy his *younger cousins a dishwasher* to save them having to do all the dishes at home.

Lastly, the rangatahi spoke about how the staff manaaki them Te Ōnewanewa.

Seven rangatahi spoke of how kaiako Māori contributed to the wellbeing of the kaupapa whānau positively. Rangatahi waru said

Yeah cos they are really important to us as well, they like help our wellbeing a lot. They contribute to it.

In contrast, rangatahi whā also mentioned how some teachers did not recognise her mana and therefore their manaaki failed to support her. She said

Yeah I think they (teachers) support me in the way they want to support me, but not the way I want.

The first hui discussed the lack of manaaki from the government. Rangatahi tahi said that it would be easier to live in Australia than in Tāmaki Makaurau as *all your money goes on rent*. Rangatahi rua said

You know if you are homeless, wouldn't it be smart just to go to prison, like just go rob a bank or something, because then you get a bed, get a shower, get some bros, the TV.

Aroha

Aroha is also a uniquely Māori concept. It stems from the kupu aro and hā, to turn towards and to share breath. The rangatahi referred to aroha, as love and respect in this study. When asked what was important in his whānau rangatahi tahi said *each other* because *everyone has each other's back*. When asked what

was celebrated in their whānau six rangatahi responded with *everything*. The importance of unconditional aroha was highlighted by rangatahi tekau who commented on how whānau have their ups and downs. Rangatahi iwa defined whānau as aroha and as her kaupapa whānau. In contrast, rangatahi waru commented on how sometimes whānau support was not always well received, but it always came from a place of aroha to *make you better*. She said

They could be really supportive, or say something to offend you, but they are only trying to make you better, and like get you places, so they are just providing support in a different way.

In one hui the rangatahi talked about how aroha, attention, and positivity support their whānau to be well

I think we just need some more positive energy around us. To be positive you need positive energy around you. So just as long as you have that surrounding you, you can be positive as well, which is good for your wellbeing.

The rangatahi talked about how they had the capacity to contribute to the wellbeing of their whānau today and in the future as mātua and tūpuna.

Rangatahi whitu and iwa would like to whāngai tamariki in the future. They spoke about the importance of treating their tamariki as *equals*, to make them feel *loved*. While they all agreed that self-care is important, they also commented on how this was not always possible without the support and aroha of whānau.

Discussion

The importance of whanaungatanga, ūkaipō, Māoritanga, and wairua are recognised as determiners of whānau ora (Whānau Ora Taskforce, 2010). Furthermore, the interconnection of these concepts is recognised across all Māori wellbeing frameworks. Relationships within whānau are where the wellbeing of tamariki can be protected and nourished. Although some of the rangatahi noted that their whānau sometimes faced stressful circumstances, the findings align with Edward et al's research (2007), who found that rangatahi Māori want to spend more time with their whānau.

The rangatahi all saw whanaungatanga as a key determiner for whānau ora in the past, present and future. The rangatahi see their best interests as collective and the deep connection between their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of their whānau. This study challenges the ideology behind 'child focussed policy'. Their voice directly challenges western psychology and 'child centred' government approaches, which target scientific inquiry and intervention at individuals (Whanau Ora Taskforce, 2010). The findings reaffirm the literature arguing for collective rights to wellbeing to be foregrounded, and that by building capacity within whānau will directly impact the wellbeing of our mokopuna Māori and the wellbeing of hapū and iwi (King et al., 2018).

Connection to ūkaipō was varied for the rangatahi, reflecting the diverse realities of Māori (Durie, 2011). Regardless of their connection to their ūkaipō, the spiritual connection to papatūānuku supported their whānau wellbeing. For rangatahi who

had been denied these rights, they received this nourishment through marae noho, or going camping and being in nature with their kaupapa whānau. For those who have strong connections to their hapū and iwi, visiting the urupā and learning about where their tūpuna once lived, and being kaitiaki of their whenua was important.

The sense of belonging, connection, and spiritual guardianship are well documented as determiners of wellbeing, for Māori. These findings reaffirm the interconnected nature of whānau ora (Whānau ora Taskforce, 2010). When whānau reconnect to their ūkaipō and can exercise their kaitiakitanga, this provides opportunities for whanaungatanga within their whānau, which rangatahi felt was the most important determiner of whānau ora.

There is a growing evidence base supporting the importance of culture, and how culture supports wellbeing (Ministry of Education, 2016). For some students, their main connection to Māori culture is through their te reo Māori class or Te Whānau. Alongside teaching, kaiako Māori are often responsible for crafting the identities of many rangatahi at Te Ōnewanewa (Lee, 2005). Smith (2012) notes that the responsibilities for kaimahi Māori, extend into the beyond the classroom to teaching identity and culture. The rangatahi voice was clear in this study, Māori and Pasifika kaiako are key supportive factors for wellbeing.

Ngā take pū whānau

Although tikanga has adapted over time, the core principles of whanaungatanga, aroha, manaakitanga, tapu, mana and pono remain integral for the survival and flourishing of our people and relationships. During the hui, these tikanga were described in English, using words such as support, love, care, connection, and being genuine. Whereas, the practices and interactions they described indicated their whānau were exercising manaakitanga and aroha.

Being able to manaaki others is recognised as a wellness indicator within literature. Manaaki promotes positive cohesive social interaction and protection against isolation (Whānau ora Taskforce, 2010). This study aligns with research that suggests manaakitanga is reciprocal, active (Jones, 2019), intergenerational, and exercised by kaupapa whānau, and whakapapa whānau, hapū and iwi (LeeMorgan et al., 2019). Penehira (2019) reminds us that we have the capacity to lift others' mauri and wellbeing. Across the hui the rangatahi were rangatira in this regard, serving and activating manaaki within their whānau, and had collective responsibilities.

Previous research indicates that supportive relationships are a key ingredient to educational success (Ministry of Education, 2016). Positive teacher-student relationships are protective factors for resilience, increase student achievement, and promote behavioural and emotional investment in school (Bishop et al., 2007). Two hui noted that the kaiako Māori supported them in ways they wanted to be supported and recognised their mana. These findings reaffirm the

importance of having kaiako Māori, and a safe space such as Te Whānau for Māori within English-medium schools.

Manaaki is a two-way process of giving and receiving (Mead, 2016). The rangatahi also articulated situations when adults in their lives, including teachers, had attempted to support them. Yet, this support failed to recognise their mana, therefore, their actions were counterproductive. When adults failed to recognise the mana of the rangatahi, they felt that their ahua was not pono or tika and they were disingenuous. This paradox highlights the gap between what teachers and students perceive as emotional support (Liebenberg et al., 2016). For all schools, this point highlights the importance of listening to rangatahi, acknowledging their rangatiratanga, and involving them during the support process.

The notion of positivity as a determiner for whānau ora is an important finding. This was mentioned as an aspiration by one rangatahi, after three rangatahi discussed how judgemental society is in general. Put downs, racism and deficit ideologies are the opposite of aroha and trample the wairua and mana of a person and their whānau. Whānau and Māori parenting has been viewed through a deficit paradigm and this has created systemic barriers for wellbeing (Pihama & Cameron, 2012).

Some rangatahi alluded to the idea that simply being Māori is viewed as a deficit variable. There is scarce recognition of systematic and historical issues that have contributed to systemic disadvantage (Simmonds et al., 2019). Young people, and in particular rangatahi Māori, have voiced that discrimination is a major

problem in Aotearoa (Office of the Children's Commissioner & Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children, 2019). Government agencies, educators, researchers, and psychologists need to adopt and advocate for strength-based, mana enhancing, non-discriminatory approaches in their practice to support whānau to flourish.

Conclusion

This article is a contribution to kaupapa Māori research which argues that whānau are 'sites of wellbeing' and presents useful findings for how English-medium schools can directly influence the wellbeing of whānau within their communities (Pihama et al., 2017). While the findings are important for the whānau, hapū and iwi within the research context, this study has only scratched the surface of what whānau ora means to the rangatahi at Te Ōnewanewa. Further research could widen the study to the other year levels, rangatahi Māori not taking te reo Māori, to other schools in the surrounding area, and to include the voices of whānau collectives.

This article has provided an opportunity to present rangatahi perspectives within my community. The majority of rangatahi felt that their friends in Te Whānau and the wider school were part of their whānau, and that their kaiako Māori were key supports for their wellbeing. Their views reaffirm the need for tikanga Māori, whānau based supports at English-medium schools. The rangatahi perspectives reaffirm that wellbeing is interconnected, spiritually grounded, multi-dimensional, contextual, and collective. They spoke about connection within whānau, or

whanaungatanga, connection to ūkaipō, connection to Māoritanga, and connection to wairua. In addition, they discussed the important tikanga that underpin relationships such as pono and mana, however practices based on manaaakitanga and aroha were the most frequently mentioned.

The rangatahi in this study understood when their whānau were well and appeared to have their basic needs for wellbeing, defined by them, met. Māori wellbeing is interconnected, therefore until all whānau, hapū and iwi are thriving mokopuna Māori rights to wellbeing cannot be realised as a people. Jackson (2019) explains how this discussion is more than reclaiming long denied rights, but rather it is the pursuit of a Māori understanding of 'rightness.' Only then can relational justice be restored.

The wānanga process demonstrated how rangatahi are rangatira within whānau, hapū and iwi. They are inspired by their tūpuna to address and overcome issues facing their whānau today, in the hope that this will support the wellbeing of future generations. Pohatu (2013) states, we have the explanations and the solutions; we are mokopuna and tūpuna, and kaitiaki of each other. Rangatahi tekau captured this sentiment in her kōrero about her hopes and aspirations for her whānau. They are beautiful words to end on:

My dreams and hopes (are for my whānau)... to be themselves, and not to be someone that you are not... to embrace your culture ... in one shape or form, the way you want to do it. Be healthy, be honest, like if there is something wrong, tell me, and I'll help you, no matter what. **Glossary**

<p>Aotearoa: land of the long white cloud.</p>	<p>makutu: to inflict physical and psychological harm through spiritual power.</p>	<p>pūrākau: myth, ancient legend, story.</p>
<p>aroaha: love, respect, compassion, empathise.</p>	<p>mana: spiritual vitality, proximity to the divine.</p>	<p>rāhui: to put in place a temporary ritual prohibition</p>
<p>atua: god, supernatural being.</p>	<p>mana motuhake: autonomy, self-determination independence.</p>	<p>rangatira: high rank, chiefly, noble.</p>
<p>hapū: to be pregnant, group of people from a common ancestor, subtribe.</p>	<p>manaakitanga: hospitality, kindness, respect, support, care for others.</p>	<p>raupatu: land confiscation.</p>
<p>He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirene: Declaration of Independence of New Zealand.</p>	<p>māoritanga: Māori culture, Māori practices and beliefs, Māoriness, Māori way of life.</p>	<p>rongoā: remedy, medicine.</p>
<p>hui: meeting, gathering.</p>	<p>marae noho: marae stay.</p>	<p>te ao wairua: spiritual world.</p>

<p>iwi: largest social group in Māori society that are made up of related hapū.</p>	<p>mātauranga: knowledge, wisdom.</p>	<p>te pā harakeke: flaxplant.</p>
<p>kai: food.</p>	<p>matua: father, parent, uncle.</p>	<p>te rito o te pā harakeke: The center shoot of the flaxbush.</p>
<p>kaiako: teacher.</p>	<p>mātua: parents.</p>	<p>Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Treaty of Waitangi.</p>
<p>kaimahi: colleague.</p>	<p>mauri: physical vitality, life force.</p>	<p>teina: younger sibling.</p>
<p>kaitiakitanga: guardianship.</p>	<p>mihimihi: pay tribute, thank, acknowledge.</p>	<p>tika: to be correct, fair, accurate.</p>
<p>karakia: pray, ritual chant.</p>	<p>mokopuna: Grandchild.</p>	<p>tikanga: correct procedure, custom</p>
<p>kaupapa: Plan, purpose, theme, topic, agenda, matter of discussion.</p>	<p>ngā hononga: connections.</p>	<p>Tāmaki Makaurau: Tāmaki of a hundred lovers.</p>

<p>kāwanatanga: governance, government, authority, governorship.</p>	<p>papakāinga: original home, home base.</p>	<p>tāngata whenua: People of the land</p>
<p>kōrero: talk, to speak.</p>	<p>pono: to be true, valid, honest, genuine.</p>	<p>taonga: treasure.</p>
<p>tapu: restriction, sacredness.</p>	<p>ūkaipō: source of sustenance, origin.</p>	<p>whakawhanaungatanga: to make connections.</p>
<p>tino rangatiratanga: sovereignty, self determination, autonomy.</p>	<p>wānanga: to meet, deliberate, consider.</p>	<p>whānau: extended family, birth, to be born.</p>
<p>tūpuna: ancestors, grandparents.</p>	<p>whakapapa: ancestry genealogy.</p>	<p>whānau ora: collective wellbeing.</p>
<p>whāngai: adopted child, a customary practice.</p>	<p>whakataukī: proverb.</p>	<p>whanaungatanga: connections, relationships between people.</p>

whenua: land, placenta.

References

- Auckland Council Research and Evaluation Unit. (2020). *Māori in Tāmaki Makaurau 2018 Census results*. Auckland Council.
<https://knowledgeauckland.org.nz/media/1453/m%C4%81ori-2018-censusinfosheet.pdf>
- Berryman, M., & Eley, E. (2018). Gathering and Listening to the Voices of Māori Youth: What Are the System Responses? In R. Bourke & J. Loveridge (Eds.), *Radical Collegiality through Student Voice* (pp. 103–126). Springer Singapore.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-1858-0_7
- Bishop, R. (2011). Freeing ourselves from neo-colonial domination in research. In *Freeing Ourselves* (Vol. 66, pp. 1–30). SensePublishers.
- Bishop, R., Berryman, M., Cavanagh, T., & Teedy, L. (2007). *Te kōtahitanga. Establishing a culturally responsive pedagogy of relations in mainstream secondary school classrooms Phase 3, Phase 3*. Ministry of Education, Research Division.
- Bishop, R., & Glynn, T. (1999). Researching in Maori contexts: An interpretation of participatory consciousness. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 20(2), 167–182. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07256868.1999.9963478>

Boulton, A., & Gifford, H. (2014). Conceptualising the link between resilience and Whanau Ora. *Mai Journal*, 3(2), 111–125.

Cram, F. (2019). Measuring Māori children's wellbeing: A discussion paper. *MAI Journal: New Zealand Journal of Indigenous Scholarship*, 8(1).

<https://doi.org/10.20507/MAIJournal.2019.8.1.2>

Doel-Mackaway, H. (2019). 'Ask Us ... This Is Our Country': Designing Laws and Policies with Aboriginal Children and Young People. *The International Journal of Children's Rights*, 27(1), 31–65. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15718182-02701008>

Durie, M. (2011). *Ngā tini whetū: Navigating Māori futures*. Huia.

Edwards, S., McCreanor, T., & Moewaka-Barnes, H. (2007). Maori family culture: A context of youth development in Counties/Manukau. *Kotuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online*, 2(1), 1–15.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1177083X.2007.9522420> Espejo-Yaksic, N. (2018).

International Laws on the Rights of Indigenous

Children. In W. Gao (Ed.), *Metrology* (pp. 1–31). Springer Singapore.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-3182-3_21-1

Housing First Auckland. (2018). *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata: Auckland's Homeless*

Count Report (pp. 1–70). Auckland Council.

<https://www.aucklandhomelesscount.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/PiT-FinalReport-Final.pdf>

Jackson, M. (2019). In the End “The Hope of Decolonization.” In E. A. McKinley & L. T. Smith (Eds.), *Handbook of Indigenous Education* (pp. 101–110).

Springer Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-3899-0_59

Jones, C. (2019). An approach to working with Māori law. In L. Lee-Morgan, J.-A. Archibald, & J. De Santolo (Eds.), *Decolonizing Research: Indigenous Storywork As Methodology*. Zed Books, Limited.

King, P., Cormack, D., & Kōpua, M. (2018). Oranga mokopuna: A tāngata whenua rights-based approach to health and wellbeing. *MAI Journal: A New Zealand Journal of Indigenous Scholarship*, 7(2).

<https://doi.org/10.20507/MAIJournal.2018.7.2.6> Landsown, G. (2011). Every Child’s Rights to be Heard: A Resource Guide on the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment no.12. Save the Children UK.

https://stream.massey.ac.nz/pluginfile.php/3329431/mod_book/chapter/735563/Right%20to%20be%20heard.pdf

Lawson-Te Aho, K. (2010). *Definitions of whānau: A review of selected literature*.

Families Commission.

<http://www.familiescommission.govt.nz/sites/default/files/downloads/definitions>

-of-whanau.pdf

Lee, J. (2005). *Māori cultural regeneration: Pūrākau as pedagogy*. Centre for Research in Lifelong learning International Conference, Scotland.

Lee-Morgan, J., Hoskins, R., Te Nana, R., Rua, M. R., & Knox, W. (Advisor).

(2019). *Ahakoā te aha, mahingia te mahi: In service to homeless whānau in Tāmaki Makaurau: A report of the Manaaki Tāngata Programme at Te Puea Memorial Marae*. (Internet; Second edition). Te Puea Memorial Marae; Massey University Library Catalogue.

<http://ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=cat00245a&AN=massey.b5142128&site=edslive&scope=site>

Libesman, T. (2007). Can International Law Imagine the World of Indigenous Children? *The International Journal of Children's Rights*, 15(2), 283–309.
<https://doi.org/10.1163/092755607X206524>

Liebenberg, L., Theron, L., Sanders, J., Munford, R., van Rensburg, A., Rothmann, S., & Ungar, M. (2016). Bolstering resilience through teacherstudent interaction: Lessons for school psychologists. *School Psychology International*, 37(2), 140–154.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034315614689> Lundy, L. (2019). Interesting, intense, inspiring: Reflections from the symposium.

In N. Lynch (Ed.), *Children's Rights in Aotearoa New Zealand, Reflections on the 30th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child*. (pp. 38–40).

https://www.lawfoundation.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/2018_45_31-Childrens-Rights-Symposium_Reflections_Online-Version_rcvd-17.12.2019.pdf

Māori Affairs Committee. (2013). *Inquiry into the determinants of wellbeing for tamariki Māori* (pp. 1–44) [Government].

https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/reports/document/50DBSCH_SCR6050_1/inquiry-into-the-determinants-of-wellbeing-for-tamariki

Marsden, M. (1992). *Kaitiakitanga: A definitive introduction to the holistic world view of the Māori*. Ministry for the Environment.

McLachlan, A. D., Wirihihana, R., & Huriwai, T. (2017). Whai tikanga: The application of a culturally relevant value centred approach. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology (Online)*, 46(3), 46–54.

McRae, H., Macfarlane, A., Webber, M., & Cookson-Cox, C. (2010). *Ka Awatea: An iwi case study of Māori Students' Success*.

http://www.education.canterbury.ac.nz/research_labs/maori/publications.shtml

Mead, S. M. (2016). *Tikanga Māori: Living by Māori values* (Revised edition). Huia Publishers.

Metge, J. (2014). *New growth from old: The Whānau in the modern world*.

Victoria University Press : Made available through hoopla.

<https://www.hoopladigital.com/title/11684074>

Mikaere, A. (2007). Tikanga as the first law of Aotearoa. *Yearbook of New Zealand Jurisprudence*, 10, 24.

Ministry of Education. (2016). *Tātaiako: Cultural competencies for teachers of Māori learners*.

<https://www.educationcouncil.org.nz/sites/default/files/Tataiako.pdf>

Moeke-Pickering, T. M. (1996). *Maori identity within whanau: A review of literature*.

<https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10289/464/content.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Office of the Children's Commissioner. (2015). State of Care 2015: What we learnt from monitoring Child, Youth and Family.

<https://www.occ.org.nz/publications/reports/state-of-care-2015-what-we-learnt-from-monitoring-child-youth-and-family/>

Office of the Children's Commissioner & Oranga Tamariki-Ministry for Children.

(2019). *What makes a good life?: Children and young people's views on wellbeing*.

Paton, M. (2017). De-colonising Human Rights: Customary Justice and Child

Protection in Papua New Guinea. *The International Journal of Children's*

Rights, 25(3–4), 622–657. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15718182-02503003>
Penehira, M. (2019). Mana kaitiakitanga: Mouri moko! Mouri wahine! Mouri ora!

In C. Smith & R. Tinirau (Eds.), *HE RAU MURIMURI AROHA: Wāhine Māori insights into historical trauma and healing* (pp. 35–48). Te Atawhai o Te Ao: Independent Māori Institute for Environment & Health.

<http://journal.mai.ac.nz/content/historical-trauma-healing-and-well-beingm%C4%81oricomunities>

Pere, R. (1994). *Ako: Concepts and learning in the Māori tradition*. Te Kohanga Reo National Trust Board.

Pere, R. (1997). *Te wheke: A celebration of infinite wisdom*. Ao Ako Global Learning NZ.

Pihama, L. (2016). Positioning ourselves within kaupapa Māori research. In J. Hutchings & J. Lee (Eds.), *Decolonisation in Aotearoa: Education, research and practice*. New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

Pihama, L., & Cameron, N. (2012). Kua Tupu Te Pā Harakeke: Developing Healthy Whānau Relationships. In *For Indigenous Minds Only—A decolonization handbook* (pp. 225–244). SAR Press.
<https://hdl.handle.net/10289/13268>

Pihama, L., Lee, J., Nana, R. T., Campbell, D., Greensill, H., & Tauroa, T. (2017). Te Pā Harakeke, Whānau as a site of Wellbeing. In R. E. Rinehart, E. Emerald, & R. Matamua (Eds.), *Ethnographies in pan Pacific research:*

Tensions and positionings. Routledge.

Pohatu, T. (2013). Āta: Growing respectful relationships. *Āta: Journal of Psychotherapy Aotearoa New Zealand*, 17(1), 13–26.

<https://doi.org/10.9791/ajpanz.2013.0>

Simmonds, N., Pihama, L., & Waitoki, W. (2019). *Te Taonga o Taku Ngākau: Ancestral Knowledge and The Wellbeing of Tamariki Māori*. Te Kotahi Research Institute.

Smith, L., Cameron, N., Matakī, T., Morgan, H., Te Nana, R., & Pihama, L. (2019). Thought Space Wānanga—A Kaupapa Māori Decolonizing Approach to Research Translation. *Genealogy*, 3(4), 74.

<https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy3040074>

Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples* (Second edition). Zed Books.

Tawhai, V. (2016). Matike Mai Aotearoa! The power of youth-led decolonisation education. In J. Hutchings & J. Lee (Eds.), *Decolonisation in Aotearoa: Education, research and practice*. New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2005). *Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 7, 2005, CRC/C/GC/7/*. Refworld.

<https://www.refworld.org/docid/460bc5a62.html>

Valentine, H. (2016). Wairuatanga. In W. Waitoki & M. P. Levy (Eds.), *Te Manu Kai i te Matauranga: Indigenous Psychology in Aotearoa/New Zealand* (pp.

155–170). The New Zealand Psychological Society.

Walker, T. W. (2013). *Ngā Pā Harakeke o Ngati Porou: A lived experience of whānau*.

Webber, M. (2011). Gifted and proud: On being academically exceptional and Maori. In P. Whitinui (Ed.), *Kia tangi te tītī: Permission to speak: Successful schooling for Māori students in the 21st century: Issues, challenges and alternatives* (pp. 227–241). New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

Whānau Ora Taskforce. (2010). *Whānau Ora: Report of the Taskforce on Whānau-Centred Initiatives*.

<https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/aboutmsdand-our-work/publications-resources/planning-strategy/whanauora/whanauora-taskforce-report.pdf>